



August 2000

EPA FACT SHEET PORTLAND HARBOR SITE Portland, Oregon

EPA Proposes Portland Harbor to National Priorities List

Why List Portland Harbor?

Studies have shown that elevated levels of contaminants threaten a six-mile stretch of the Willamette River from the southern tip of Sauvie Island to Swan Island, generally referred to as Portland Harbor (see map). The harbor sediments contain the pesticide DDT, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (carcinogenic compounds found in petroleum products). These contaminants may pose risks to people, fish, and other wildlife, and the contaminant levels are high enough for EPA to propose Portland Harbor to the NPL.

The Lower Willamette is a very popular area for recreation, including fishing. The river provides a critical migratory corridor and rearing habitat for salmon and steelhead. Two runs of steelhead and two runs of chinook that use Portland Harbor are currently classified as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The upland area adjacent to Portland Harbor is highly industrialized, and the river has heavy marine traffic. Possible sources of the harbor contamination include hazardous waste and petroleum product storage; marine construction; oil gasification plant operations; wood treating; agricultural chemical production; natural gas plant operations; chlorine production; ship loading, maintenance, and repair; and rail car manufacturing.

Public Comments Due by September 25

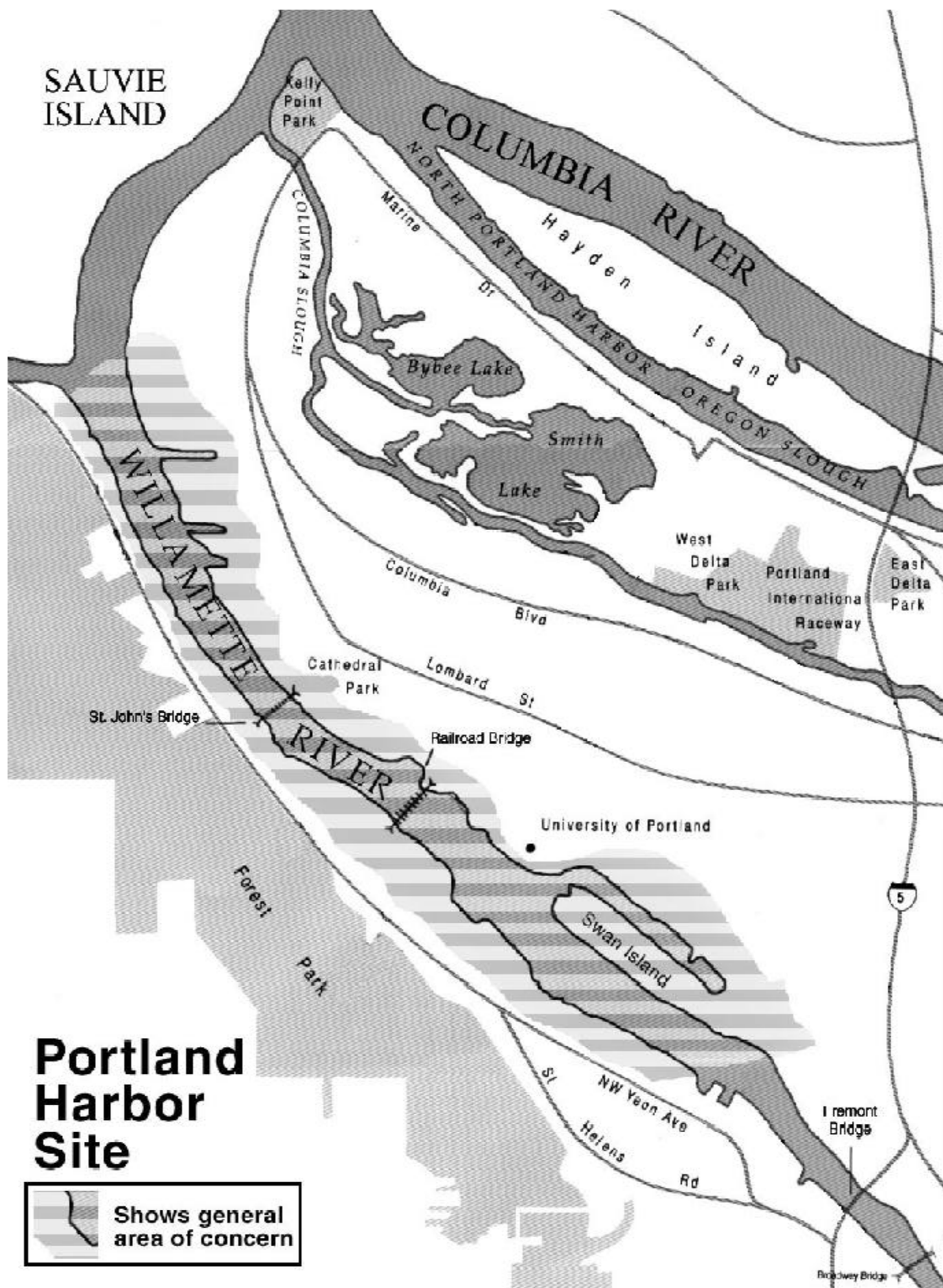
The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is requesting comments on its proposal to add the Portland Harbor site to the National Priorities List (NPL). The NPL is EPA's list of the nation's most contaminated hazardous waste sites that are targeted for cleanup.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), which is already involved in many cleanups on the Lower Willamette riverbanks, worked for over two years to develop a state-led cleanup approach to Portland Harbor. However, several of the criteria for deferring the cleanup to the state were not met. In July, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber concurred with EPA's decision to propose that Portland Harbor be added to the NPL, with the understanding that DEQ and EPA will work together on the cleanup, and that it will be integrated with other state initiatives to restore the health of the river.

DEQ and EPA to Jointly Manage Investigation and Cleanup

DEQ and EPA will continue to work together, with DEQ taking the lead role on investigation of upland contamination and EPA taking the lead role on investigation of sediment contamination. As the investigation of the Portland Harbor site proceeds, the site boundaries will be defined.

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How to Comment on the Proposal

The Portland Harbor proposal was published in the Federal Register on July 27, 2000. EPA invites you to comment on the proposal. After the sixty-day comment period closes, EPA will consider all comments received before listing the site as final on the NPL. **Comments must be postmarked by September 25, 2000. Send an original and three copies of comments.**

By postal mail:
Docket Coordinator, Headquarters
U.S. EPA CERCLA Docket Office, 5201G
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

By express mail or courier:
Docket Coordinator, Headquarters
U.S. EPA CERCLA Docket Office
1235 Jefferson Davis Highway
Crystal Gateway #1, 1st floor
Arlington, Virginia 22202

Comments may also be e-mailed, in ASCII format only, to superfund.docket@epa.gov. E-mailed comments must be followed by an original and three copies by mail or express mail.

More Information

For reviewing the documents that support the NPL proposal:

Bob Phillips
EPA Region 10
1200 Sixth Avenue, ECL-110 Seattle,
Washington 98101
206-553-6699 or toll free at 1-800-424-4372
phillips.bob@epa.gov

For electronic information about Portland Harbor:

EPA Region 10 web site
<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/>
Click on "Index," then "P," and then "Portland Harbor, Oregon."

DEQ Portland Harbor web site
<http://www.deq.state.or.us/wmc/cleanup/PortlandHarbor/portlandharbor.htm>

For information about technical issues and about the proposed listing:

Sally Thomas, EPA Project Manager
206-553-2102 or toll free at 1-800-424-4372

Chip Humphrey, EPA Project Manager
503-326-2678

Mike Rosen, DEQ Portland Harbor Manager
503-229-6712

For general information:

Cindy Colgate, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator
206-553-1815 or toll free at 1-800-424-4372

Kim Cox, DEQ Portland Harbor Project Coordinator-503-229-6590

EPA strives to provide you with useful environmental information. Please call, write, or e-mail us to let us know how we can improve our fact sheets to suit your needs. You can e-mail Cindy Colgate at colgate.cindy@epa.gov.

To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the EPA representatives listed.



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